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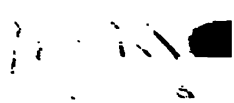
With Double Pipe

Owen Seaman

1. No subject.

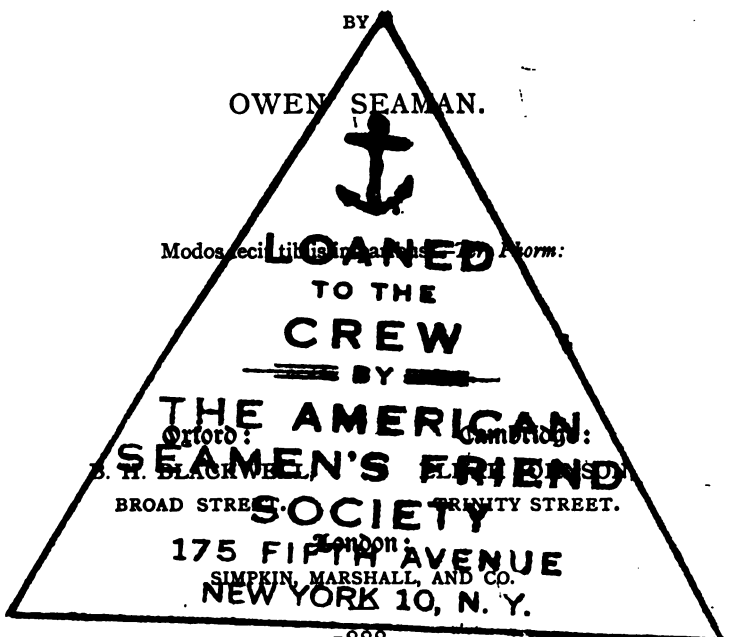
WITH DOUBLE PIPE.



WITH DOUBLE PIPE

BY

OWEN SEAMAN.



Modos fecit tibi is in parvulis. — *Ter. Phorm:*

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HIGH STREET.

TO

MY SISTER ETHEL

FOR HER

COMING OF AGE

THESE

TWENTY-ONE SETS OF VERSE

AS FROM A PLAYER THAT PLAYETH UPON

A DOUBLE PIPE

NOW IN LIGHTER, NOW IN DEEPER 'MODE.'

MAY 17TH, 1888.

My thanks are due to the Editors of the Cambridge Review *and* Oxford Magazine *for allowing me to republish many of these verses.*

I have made a few proper emendations.

O. S.

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WITH DOUBLE PIPE.

I.

A Plea for Trigamy.

I've been trying to fashion a wifely ideal,
And find that my tastes are so far from concise
That, to marry completely, no fewer than three 'll
Suffice.

I've subjected my views to severe atmospheric
Compression; but still, in defiance of force,
They distinctly fall under three heads, like a cleric
Discourse.

My *first* must be fashion's own fancy-bred daughter,
Proud, peerless, and perfect—in fact *comme il faut;*
A waltzer and wit of the very first water—
For *show.*

But these beauties that serve to make all the men
jealous,
Once face them alone in the family cot!
Heaven's angels incarnate (the novelists tell us)
They're *not*.

But so much for appearances. Now for my *second*,
My lover, the wife of my home and my heart:
Of all fortune and fate of my life to be reckon'd
A part.

She must know all the needs of a rational being,
Be skilled to keep council, to comfort, to coax;
And, above all things else, be accomplished at
seeing
My jokes.

I complete the ménage by including one other
With all the domestic prestige of a hen:
As my housekeeper, nurse, or, it may be, a mother
Of men.

Total *three!* and the virtues all well represented;
With fewer than this such a thing can't be done;
Though I've known married men who declare they're contented
With one.

Would you hunt during harvest, or hay-make in winter?
And how can one woman expect to combine
Certain qualifications essentially internecine?

You may say that my prospects are (legally) sunless;
I state that I find them as clear as can be:—
I will marry *no* wife, since I can't do with one less
Than three.

II.

An Introduction to a Classical Theme,

FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF OVERTURES.

SHE had the angels' artless air,
As if, by a feathery fall,
Dropt from the spheres, and dancing there
At that "terrestrial ball."

Love (as a general rule) has eyes;
Hers were of heaven's hue,
Moist as the blue of mirror'd skies
Seen in a sea of blue.

Love (I need hardly say) had hair,
Hair of her own, her own;
Like harvest gold whereon the fair
Wind from the west has blown.

A very Siren's voice was hers,
  Proof against wiles of wax;
Or like some gentle chorister's
  Before it fairly cracks.

And ah! the nectar of her lips!
  Such sweets the butterfly,
Fit emblem of my frailty, sips,
  Fain (if I'm right) to die.

And then her waist! its witchery
  Reminded one of Circe,
What time she made those ancients cry
  (In Greek, of course) Gramercy!

And ankles! Fit for fairy elf
  That recks not skirt or scandal;
Two sizes less than Leda's self
  Took when she tried a sandal.

I quickly loved. Let laugh who will
And call the feelings false
That trace their rise to a quadrille,
Their issue to a valse.

There 's something rather fine about
The love that simply flings
Its noble self away without
Investigating things.

I always had a passion for
The sudden and the terse;
To cry, "Be mine for better, or,
At any rate, for worse."

And so my prudence strained her tether;
I turned with glowing glance,
To ask why should not we together
Join hands in real romance.

I could not breathe her name in hot
  Rapt utterance, because
Unfortunately I had not
  A notion what it was.

Perhaps I'm not the only one
  To whom it has occurred
That introducing might be done
  In tones that can be heard.

It makes me really rather sad
  To think what waste of shame
I might have spared if I had had
  The luck to catch her name.

I mentioned with my native grace
  Love's seed that she had sown,
Apologizing for the pace
  At which the thing had grown.

And then I touched on Cupid's arts,
Citing the general drift
Of precedent to prove his darts
Were surest when most swift.

At this conceit I cannot say
She looked the least confused,
But smiled in quite a candid way
And seemed, perhaps, amused.

Adding, "I think my carriage waits:
You'll see me to the door?
So good of you! My husband hates
To sit up after four."

III.

Maritandi te Salutant.

Feb. 29th, 1888 (being Leap Year).

Ave ! Annus Bissextilis !*
Dying men, we cry thee grace !
(Strange how well the Roman style is
Suited to the present case.)

Warriors we mutely muster
Doomed to fall before our time ;
While the sixth effulgent lustre
Finds us nicely in our prime.

* The *Oxford Magazine* of this date kindly inserted the following apology.—"Dear Mr. Editor (says the author), I send you some Leap Year lines. I haven't dared to put the vocative of *Annus* (is there one ?) in the first line, in case it should be read as a monosyllable."

"*Nuper*" we were stamped "*idoneus*,"
Fought the casual campaign,
Careful not to plant erroneous
Notions in a woman's brain.

Fairly have we braved the *genus*
Femininum heretofore;
Tilted at the ring with *Venus*
In the lists of *Mars*(-in-law);

When a man might take a survey
Calmly of his *vis-à-vis;*
Now—"*maritum jam protervâ*
Fronte petet Lalage."

This thy handiwork, O Leap Year!
Thou that comest "once in four;"
Creepy grows our flesh and creepier,
Like a bird's before a boa.

"*L'homme propose,*" and those who choose 'll
Place a veto on the plan;
When "*les femmes disposent,*" refusal
Lies beyond the power of man.

Troubadours must now "*se ranger;*"
Lute and lyre and mandolin—
Tout cela nous avons changé;
And reversing's coming in.

Ave! Prid. Kal. Mart. Bissextil.!
Brave, but moribund, the breast
Swells beneath the fancy textile
Fabric of our winter vest;

Never have we known alarm or
Taught our diaphragm to quail,
Fronting "foe in shining armour"
Or, it might be, *coat of male;*

Now we own ourselves as helpless
As an underdone recruit;
For we'd sooner meet a whelpless
Bear than face a *female suit.*

IV.

An Elegy in Bucolics.

Ah me! that we might but forget the loss
Of all things dear, though thus we be condemned
To taste forgetfulness of that we loved;
And yet, O memory of my lost joy,
Bring her again to me, so near, so near,
That in her presence I forget my loss,
And only know the ecstasy of love.

There, where at set of sun the evening gale
Comes faintlier laden with the breath of thyme
And all sweet perfume of the golden hours,

Where is no sound to stir the sleep of noon,
Save bleatings of the fold or lowing kine,
Or murmured cooing of the love-charmed dove,—
She lived! a sunlight in her lowly home;
Lowly, not mean; no meanness where she moved.
Her sire,—gruff-throated he and grim of mien,
Kind-natured, yet, and knowing well his place
(A tenant on the family estate),—
Would give me constant welcome when I came.
The mother too, among her stripling brood,
A portly soul withal and something stout,
Was hearty in her welcome when I came.
How would they mark the footfall that they knew!
How flock to meet me at the wicket-gate!
And she—but how shall human language paint
One that above all human thought was high,
Being not human, but of other mould?—
She drew me, and I followed at her call.
And when I spake full proud to her I loved—

"Sweet, I shall get me fame of thee anon,
For thou art passing fair and thou art mine,
None other's," she for modesty was dumb,
And hearing would not seem to hear my praise.
But on a day it chanced that there was named
A concourse to the which all men should bring
Her whom each eye saw fairest, and I smiled
To think how she, my choice, should bear the palm
Of beauty, and shine fairest of the fair.
And fond I lavished on her gifts untold,
Thinking by added charms of art to grace
The comeliness which nature made her own;
And all men deemed her fairest of the fair.
But better loved she in her lowly home
All unadorned to fill her lowly place,
And wait my wonted footstep morn and eve,
Than, widening as to suit a wider sphere,
To shape herself to grander things, and sit
A spectacle for every critic's eye.

And pining for the peace which once was hers,
Slow sickening she passed before her time.

* * * * * *

And so I hold it better, come what may,
To win no prize at all at cattle-shows,
Than lose, through simply overfeeding her,
Your *favourite sow*, a prey to apoplexy.

V.

Coming Out.

JUST a week more of waiting, a week and a day,
And the night of delight will be here;
So ply me your very best pinions, I pray,
Wednesday, dear!

We've considered the question, and find that I must
Have arrived (beyond rational doubt)
"Unto years of discretion," and that's why I'm just
Coming out.

So we're giving a dance, to establish the fact
That I'm one with the World and his Wife;
And may join, if I choose, in the popular game
Known as Life.

Yes, we're giving a dance—on an excellent floor—
To announce that I've come on the scene,
And that men for the future must say nothing more
Than they mean.

And the dress I'm to wear is a wonder of white,
Suggesting a fugitive dove;
And, I'm happy to say, it embraces me quite
Like a glove.

And the household will come and inspect my array,
While I try to look careless and bland,
Like a hair-dresser's doll pirouetting away
On a stand.

And I fancy a bouquet in quite the best style
From a gallant anonymous swain,
Whose ingenuous blushes will render his guile
Very vain.

And I dream of the partners that jump and that jig,
  And the couples that charge and chase;
And the men who convey you about like a big
    Double-bass.

And the fun is to last from a fit time for bed,
  All the lovely night through up to five;
Till the danc'd and the dancers are rather more
    dead
    Than alive.

Then follows discussion, when every one goes,
  Of the dresses and who wore what;
Of the men who were perfect to dance with, and
    those
    Who were not.

And at last and alone I shall probably scan
  My programme and gravely reflect
That I've danced with one partner more frequent-
    ly than
    Was correct.

And the whole to conclude about noon the next
day
With a stiffness and something of pique,
To think that one cannot come out in this way
Once a week.

And the moral?—oh, bubbles will burst at a touch,
And I shan't be a child any more;
Only sadder and wiser by ever so much
Than before.

VI.

A Dream of Unfair Women.

I AM a poet of the later birth,
  The limit of whose passions none may tell:
My verse indeed embraces heaven and earth,
  And—er—well—
The more infernal neighbourhood of Hades,
  A spot to epic poets of much use
For introducing gentlemen and ladies
  On the loose.

When looking for a "local habitation,"
  Alike for every class commodious,
I always chose for general situation
  Erebus;

My usual route is by lack-lustre caves;
If possible, I dream that I have gone
By limpid-lapsing lymph and wild wan waves;
(Note the "wan").

Thus in my dreams I passed the Avernian lake;
(Pure fiction in the interests of rhyme:
Indeed my hammock held me wide awake
All the time);
But (lies again!) as o'er the Stygian "grind"
I cross'd, there chanced upon my eyes to strike
A female form, distinctly, to my mind,
Vulture-like.

Shrouding her shrunken shoulder-blades, she wore
A shawl that seemed to shelve a shady lot
Of victuals, part her own, and vastly more
That were not.

This with her other weird and wily ways
Sent the thought throbbing through my thumping head—
"It is that Person who in college days
Made my bed."

A groan there came from vitals hunger-gnaw'd;
(Ever a fiend snatch'd the food from her lip)
"You're very right," the groan said, "my liege lord
Was a gyp;
This woman here whose duty it was erst to
Assist in knocking tea-cups off the shelf,
Once was my 'help,' but now, you see, prefers to
Help herself.

"I mind me of a time, sir, when I glanc'd
Into a book of yours that lay about
Called 'Tantalus' or something, (it so chanc'd
You were out,)

I don't know much about the Latin Tripos,
But yet it seems to me a trifle queer
How like that gent's position was to my pos-
ition here."

She spoke. Meseem'd that half-a-crown were
proper
To shew my pity for a fallen foe;
Economy however bade me drop a
Tear and go.
Then as I mused on sleep and dreams that follow,
"Ay," saying with the playwright, "there's the
rub!"
I passed to where one seemed to wash and wallow
In a tub

That here my ancient laundress stood confess'd,
It needed no diviner's art to shew,
For she was emblematically dress'd
As below:—

Odd socks on feet, a shirt less wash'd than
"bil'd,"
A kerchief utterly devoid of hem,
With collar crumply-mangled such as styl'd
G.O.M.

Her scantiness of costume was a symbol
Of those felonious laundresses who glean
Whole bags of soil'd clothes and return a thimble-
ful of clean.
Thereat I drew the line and forth I fared to
The ferry (last boat leaves at half-past six),
For night drew on and I was not prepared to
Swim the Styx.

VII.

The Ballad of Beauty's Worth.

("Your Soft Soap is the best; it pays."—*Advt.*)

She braided hair of hazel brown,
Fit aureole for an angel's face;
Glamour of spring-tide glancing down
Lent golden glory to her grace:
She braided all her glowing hair,
And dallied with each truant tress;
She was exceptionally fair,
Was Dahlia Dandie-Lyonnesse.

Dahlia Dandie-Lyonnesse!
A stranger really might suppose

The sound had in it high noblesse—
Mais non! it was a name she chose
When first in beauty's blush she faced
The footlights of old London town,
And could not but condemn the taste
Which christen'd her Eliza Brown.

And ah! the wonder of her smile!
And if, as critics would declare,
She wanted histrionic style,
What would you, with such hazel hair?
So said the stallèd swains that came
(Her part embraced a line or less)
And lisped with longing lips the name
Of Dahlia Dandie-Lyonesse.

The theme became a mystic spell,
The talk and toast of half the town;
(I doubt Cophetua could well
Have sworn by plain Eliza Brown).

A royal road is open now,
Nothing succeeds like new success;
Bow! advertising classes, bow!
To Dahlia Dandie-Lyonesse.

They bow. Among her toilet scents
A cheque for something useful lay,
Presented with the compliments
Of Messrs. X. *(Perruquiers)*;
So proud that she is pleased to state,
"I've tried all others and confess
Your hair-dye is supremely great,"—
Signed "Dahlia Dandie-Lyonesse."

THE ENVOY.

They tell me beauty is a curse:
Novels and nonsense! who denies
It swells perceptibly the purse,
If dignity but drop her eyes?

VIII.

Memories of the late Classical Tripos.

Now, if one thing on earth's calculated to wipe us
  Well out of the regions illumed by the sun,
I should say that that thing was the Classical
    Tripos,
      Part I.

For the pieces they set with such dissolute free-
    dom
  Are chosen for being corrupt to the core,
Though you wish you had had the good fortune to
    read 'em
      Before.

For if ever you chance to have studied an author
In hope of a full recognition,—your scheme
Will abortively vanish like gingerbeer froth or
Ice cream.

You may put all your purse on Theocritus, sure he
And Pindar will win from the Tragics with ease,
And the order is—Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euri-
pides.

And that rare Theophrastus will furnish a stiff-
knot
(I do not allude to the eminent *Such*),
And though only a fragment prove quite enough,
if not
Too much.

Then you probably know all about Alexander,
The things that he did or was likely to do;
You can give all his wives and his victories, and a
Map too.

But, instead, they will ask you about the unholy
Career of Timoleon—useless, because
You have not the remotest idea who Timole-
on was.

So you sit, feebly watching a swallow's light shape as
It enters, eluding the bull-dog on guard,
But withdraws, when it finds, on inspection, the
papers
Too hard.

And that monarch in marble looks leeringly at you,
Adopting the gladiatorial mien,
And you think it is quite the most imbecile statue
You've seen.

And in case from the heat you should melt like a
chemic-
al, gowns are let slip, till some officers fume,
And request you to keep to the strict academic
Costume.

What with obdurate forms and the scratching of
shifty
Quill pens and the Senate House hot as a hive,
It's a wonder as many as ten out of fifty
Survive.

And in fact the whole treatment is just of the sort
you're
Accustomed to plan for your bitterest foe;
And I never again will submit to such torture
I know.

CLARE, 1883.

IX.

The Naenia of Nemesis.

(FROM "OEDIPUS THE WRECK.")

GREAT is the wisdom of Nemesis, Nemesis!
All the wide heaven and earth is her premises;
Give her a scent, and she's off on the trail,
Adorning a moral and pointing her tail.
Altero pede she suffers from lameness,
But local defects only add to her gameness;
Nay, when it comes to a question of distance,
Vain is the criminal's dogged resistance;
Vainly they offer each ample invective,
She's the ideal Olympic detective.
For fleet is Apollo,
And Artemis fleet;

And to see how they follow
The hounds is a treat,
But when they are beaten and blowing for breath
She's in with a rush at the death, at the death.

Great is the wisdom of Nemesis, Nemesis,
All the wide heaven and earth is her premises;
Let her but catch any mortal presumin'
To shew any want of respect for her *numen.*
Why one of her nods—
You may ask all the gods—
Is worth, they admit, forty winks, forty winks,
Of a heterogeneous fowl like the Sphinx.
For jealous is Hera,
The "cow-eyed" is keen;
And mouldy Madeira
Is spice to her spleen;
But let the great Nemesis fix on her prey,
Any other engagement is bound to give way!

The crash of a crisis,
The fate of a king,
The falling of prices,—
In fact anything,—
Will agree in politely assisting to tend
As a means to this ultimate *finis* or end.
Meanwhile, till the hour of fatality strikes,
"Elect" can behave pretty much as he likes;
May gibe at the gibbet, and jest at the block,
For Destiny's darling is safe as a rock.

Great is the wisdom of Nemesis, Nemesis!
All the wide heaven and earth is her premises;
Give her a scent and she's off on the trail,
Adorning a moral and pointing her tail;
And when all the field is a-blowing for breath,
She's in with a rush at the death, at the death.

X.

The Tyrolee at Home.

HE.

WHO is this that I see,
Wielding half a young tree,
With some six inches bare round the fat of his knee?
Though as touching this matter of inches, I'm free
To submit to the charge of inaccuracy;
Yet a heathen Parsee
Were less liar than he,
Who, if made referee,
Chose to contradict me,
That whatever *is* bare is as bare as can be.

Now regarding his hat
(For I'll touch upon that),

It is such as a critic might well wonder at;
For conceive every bird
About which you have heard
As possessing a plumage intensely absurd;
And, *enfin* (in a word),
To one hat be transferr'd
A selection from all the incongruous herd.
Let that hat be a base
Flower-pot type of the grace-
ful concerns which the head of our clergy encase;
Under this any face,
Quite apart from grimace,
Would induce the beholder to spring into space.

Of his waistcoat to tell
At full length would compel
The employment of epithets *I* could not spell:
It is made of the shell,
Or, as one may say, "pell"
(A distinctly good classical term for the fell)

Of the giddy gazelle,
Sent unshriven to hell
From the mountains of Zell,
Or some similar spot which would rhyme just as well.

And the rings on his hand
Are both obvious, and
As to number would freely compare with the sand:
They are also as grand
As, I fancy, a bland
Son of Dan or Manasseh were proud to command:
And the same would seem plann'd
Of a size like the band
Round the ankles of niggers on Africa's strand.
And a mighty eyesore
Which I deeply deplore
Is the pitiful manner in which he will store
Twenty ounces or more
Of these "*articles d'or*"
On a really unusual finger—the *fore*.

And if married, he throws
Out a hint of his woes
By supporting a ring, such as custom bestows
On a bride (fitly blushing as red as a rose);
And perhaps (but who knows?)
He has bells on his toes,
As the tale of a lady of Banbury goes.
But regarding his hose,
I refuse to compose
On a subject so far more adapted to prose.

And his breeks (so to say)
Are of leather array,
And a shortness to grieve an enlightened Malay:
And as black as a Bey,
Or my hat, ere the day
Of its all-to-be-too-much-regretted decay.

And his boots are a size
Which I should not surmise

That the wildest chiropodist dared to advise,
And the first to be cast
On the national last,
Was, I venture to fancy without any doubt,
Incontestably built for some man with the gout.

Now his pipe and its bowl
(No offence to King Cole)
Would astonish the eyes of an average mole:
For it boasts of a scroll
Inexpressibly droll,
And it takes on the whole,
Some half-pound for its dole
Of tobacco as coarse as the jests of Creole:
Only fit
To be lit,
As I pledge my parole,
By live embers of very best anthracite coal;
And its stem, I may add, is beyond all control,
Being strictly the length of a rod, perch, or pole.

On his shoulders he wears
Certain murderous snares,
Such as guns, for the total extinction of hares,
Or (for aught I know) bears;
All which gives a man airs
If, as likely, he cares.
To appear in costume at the annual fairs:
Though I beg to demur
That I cannot aver
Whether such things occur
In the actual region to which I refer.

I must mention in haste
That his girth is embraced
By a belt, on æsthetical principles based,
Where, in very best taste,
Certain mottoes are chased,
Such as "God and my country," or "Want follows waste."

Who is this that I see
Wielding half a young tree
With some six inches bare round the fat of his knee?
It is he!
It is he!
'Tis the wild, 'tis the free,
'Tis the—who could it be,
But the real and original *male Tyrolee?*

SHE.

Who is this that I see
With a waist that might be
A good facsimile
Of the trunk of a cedar-in-Lebanon tree?
And a face (you'll agree)
Quite as brown as a bee
Buzzing home in a transport of garrulous glee;
Or the colour of tea
As consumed over sea
By the well known and deeply suspected Chinee?

Now her hat has a brim
Which I'd venture to hymn,
Though compared with the vision word-painting is dim;
But I safely may state
If you walked at the rate
Of at least six or eight
Miles an hour all day long very early and late,
At some subsequent date
You'd be able to prate
You had made round that hat *une tournée tout complète;*
Though I'm perfectly sure
An expression more pure
Might be found in the range of French literature.

But the brim of this hat
(To recur) is as flat
As the state of a quite imperceptible gnat,
Upon which an emu has incessantly sat;

And the summit is crown'd
By a species of mound
Which, with strangers, is strikingly apt to astound.

Now as touching her rings,
To my tongue I put strings
And refer to my former remarks on these things;
For the bard (who has wings)
Flees, as if it had stings,
From the mention of that which satiety brings;
So at least Pindar sings,
And the platitude springs
Pretty plainly from critical "arrows and slings."

But distinct is the way
She contrives a display
By the wearing of gloves like a half-hooded shay;
Though no doubt she would say
This was meant to allay
The oppressive effect of the heat of the day.

"*Circa pectus*" one sees,
Besides "*robur et aes*,"
(To adopt a remark of the gay Apulese),
Or, in sensible phrase,
Besides, possibly, stays
O'er the bust a mere *negligé* kerchief she lays.

And no doubt *this* idea
May arise from the fear
Of encountering heat too intensely severe,
Or it may be to cheer
Any eye discontent with the scenery here;
And this cause is more near
To the truth, as is clear;
For excuses of weather are palpably queer,
Seeing heat
She would meet,
Should it ever appear,
By a copious fortification of *beer*.

And her skirt's far from lean,
Like an utter French bean,
But suffusely spread over the pastoral scene;
Though the cunning, I ween,
Of the false crinoline
Is unknown to the arts of our innocent quene.

But I fully confess
To the very great stress
That is put on my brain by its wish to express
A description of dress
Which, for marvellousness,
Far exceeds the costume of immaculate Bess;
And though doubtless you think I'll continue to bless
You with more of this style, yet I nevertheless
Will conclude with the hope that you readily guess
Who this is that I see
With a waist that might be
A good facsimile

Of the trunk of a cedar-in-Lebanon tree —
It is she!
It is she!
Better half of the "he,"
Or (more accurately)
'Tis the sixty-per-cent. of the male Tyrolee.

VALLEY OF THE INN, TYROL.

XI.

To Melissa.

WHERE shall we seek
A grace more Greek,
Bright with the wonder and worth,
That we fancied fled
With the days that are dead,
And the music and motion and mirth
Of the beauty that made
The gods afraid
When they walked the ways of earth?

Fresh and fair,
To earth and air,
Borne the waves above,

She rose to her home
By the white sea-foam,
Queen of the white-winged dove;
With such will I dare
To match the rare
Grace of the limbs I love.

Blithe and sweet,
With glancing feet,
Over the dews of dawn,
The Huntress Maid
Through gorge and glade
Drove the dappled fawn:
So sweet and blithe
Is *her* light and lithe
Form as she foots the lawn.

Aphrodite!
Magic mighty
Over the hearts of old!

Artemis!
More chaste than is
The marble's chiselled cold!
Thy warmth and charm,
And *thy* self-stay'd calm,
Together she doth mould.

XII.

Morning on Lake Constance.

DARKNESS, that deeper than the middle night
Steals ever in the van of coming day,
All in a mist of vapour hid the hills
And shadowed the dead stillness of the lake,
Stirred only by the dark ship's driving prow.
  Far off the beacon peered through blurring gloom
Out of the haven's distance; so we passed
Down the dividing deeps; and silently
To westward in our wake the morning drew,
Till on the misty mountains veiled she stood,
And through the waters ran a thrill of joy,
Tremulous, as of one that sees his hope.
  But ah! no godlike glory of the sun
Burst through to break the rallied ranks of night,

To bid the hill-tops stand and shout for joy,
And all the valleys laugh for deep delight.
Only a twilight between gleam and gloom
Moved through the mist with never a magic touch;
And only over longing lands the light
As of a smile that hath more chill than charm
Played from the passionless grey eyes of day.
So dawns a face of beauty on the life
Of him that out of night's great loneliness
Looks for love's day, and lo! a phantom dawn.
All grace is there to draw the waiting eyes;
But love?—a mist is on the morning air:
Somewhere he doubts not that a golden sun
Shines even now upon some happier heart
And lights it to love's glamour: but—for him
It is the false flush of a dawn of dreams.
His day breaks, but the shadows only flee
That served to kindly shroud his solitude.

ROMANSHORN, CONSTANCE.

XIII.

Night on the Shore of Ammersee.

THE moonlight falls upon the silent lake
And on the white front of the village street,
Peering through lattice-work of beechen boughs
Upon the bridge that spans the purling beck,
Where, leaning in night's solitude, I think
Thoughts that are inspirations of the scene.
All day the sun has scorched in such a sky
As laughs upon glad champaigns of the south;
No leaf stirred in the topmost pines: the air,
Giddy with heat, hung on the listless earth;
The ripples sighed toward the shore and sank
Like hopeless kisses upon lips athirst.
Under the glamour of the sultry heaven,

Strong for youth's pleasures have we pass'd the day,
Now wending by fair tilths whose golden grain,
Content to touch the top of beauty, falls
Before the strong sweep of the circling scythe;
Now by low-lying lands where rush and reed
Rise on the rich marge of a winding stream;
Or, treading now the upland path that strives,
Beyond the shadows of the changeless pines,
Faced all the breadth of waters; thence again
Threading the mellow cornlands and the glades
We touch the level borders of the mere;
And westward lightly wafted in our barque,
That cuts with careless prow the emerald calm,
Gain the white village on the farther strand.
Till soon the sun has passed his utmost verge
And sets in golden glory; all the land
Lies in the glow of evening, consciously
Awaiting fairer visions; for the moon
Takes up her hero's dying heritage

And pours a veil of light along the earth,
That rests in semblance of the sleep of death,
Save for the breath of noon, that lingers warm.
  And so, full weary with the day's delights
Alone I wander to the lonely shore,
And on the bridge that spans the purling beck
Lean in night's solitude, and think my thoughts.
  This way, the village street, in all the charm
Of artless beauty, fronts the risen moon;
Beyond, the toiling mill-wheel takes its rest;
This side, the pier stands out into the lake,
And, lightly moored, the dreamy shallop lies
Among closed lilies on the water's lap;
And here, and here, arched avenues of beech
Gleam with a spectral glamour through the night,
Where the moon glances on their silver stems;
And far away, more felt than seen, the Alps
Stand with their burden of enduring snow,
Firm footstool of the throne of God, whose days
Are aeons, and whose years eternity.

I think of him who once in middle night
Stood on the bridge that cross'd the moonlit flood
And gave the fancy of his thoughts to rhyme.
I know no poet's art to paint the scene,
Nor none to bid the silent canvas live;
No noble river flows beneath my feet,
Washing a city's walls, and rolling down
With freight of gallant ships to the wide sea;
A tiny rivulet that turns a mill
And flows from some unstoried glen, and sings
To such as me its happy monotone—
No more. But here are lessons to be learned.
Daily the mill-wheel turns, and every day
Some heart is happier for that simple song;
And evermore the waiting lake receives
The offering ungrudged that never fails;
And I, and such as I, we are not called
To do great things, or bear a nation's hope;
We know the limits of our narrow course;
But, be it great or small, a duty done

Is the achievement of nobility.
The mill-wheel must be turned; the thirsty lake
Not fail for lack of meanest offering;
And surely hearts of men must be made glad,
Though they be not the happiest that sing.
Go, little stream, thou hast my humble thanks;
Go, and make glad the hearts of men that toil;
Go, turn thy wheel and bear thee on thy way
To flood the open waters. It is well.

I know that, looking on this scene again,
When time has mellowed all my years, I then
Shall seem to see a friend's familiar face,
And, gazing into eyes that draw the soul
With charm of influence, remember how
Long since I learn'd my lesson. Yet once more,
This once, I lean above the brook that breaks
The silver silence of the summer night;
Once more I catch the cadence of its song;—
So;—I have learn'd my lesson. I will go.

AMMERSEE, BAVARIA,
June, 1884.

XIV.

"Be she dark or fair."

Love is a match for mortal minds;
'Tis we that seek and he that finds.

I SAID, I will none but golden hair,
Gold to frame a Saxon brow;
Eyes like the blue of dawn, I said,
Needs must she have that I would wed;
And yet—not such art thou,
Sweet other face, with the charm that seems
A waking wonder that passeth dreams,
Wherein I fashion'd of fancy's touch
All that I guessed of grace;
Sweet other face,
Not such art thou, not such.

For dark is thy hair, and dark thine eyes,
Dark are thine eyes and deep;
No magic mirror of summer skies
Down in their depths doth sleep.
Only I read in their hidden fire,
Known for the light of love's desire,
How by ways that I dreamed not of
I am found of Love.

'Tis we that seek and he that finds,
For Love is a match for all men's minds.

XV.

Sea-Moods.

O MIGHT of Ocean, and ye waves that whirl
Incessant as the march of moving years,
Full often and in every mood of man
Have I held converse with the heart of thee,
And drawn a silent gladness as I gazed;
Whether the voice of myriad-dimpled mirth
Broke in soft laughter on a sun-kissed shore,
Or to the storm the waters flung their foam
And in the furrow of the crested steeps
Stark bare the silted sand lay all between,
Or when the shoreward surge made piteous moan
Low hissing to the spent wind's dolorous sough.
And these are voices of the shifting seas,
Now low in sorrow and now loud in storm.

Or under happier skies and suns that smile,
Breathing sweet peace upon a careless brow,
The changing voices of a friend unchanged.

YEAST.

The surges seethe, the shore is lonely,
And lonely with a nameless need,
Unto the strong sea's sorrow only
My heart gives silent heed.

My heart that throbs and throbbing Ocean
Move in some strange harmony;
The dreary dirge, the measured motion
Make melody for me.

From out the gloom no gleam is breaking
On waters desolate as night;
Nor any dawn of hope is waking
My heart to life and light.

I will not ask for love, nor borrow
A barren, soulless sympathy,
Only in silence speak my sorrow
Unto the silent sea.

Storm.

Dark as hell is the wild, waste heaven,
Blind with madness the wide, waste sea;
And the foam-flakes lit by the flame-red levin
Flash as the white waves flee.

And the might of the blast of the deep-mouth'd thunder,
Match'd with the might of the storm-wind's breath,
Blends sound with the seas that clash and sunder
In music of discord and death.

But, O my heart, that in strong fate's despite
  Vauntest revenge with an unwreak'd rage,
Dark with despair that knows no respite
  From wars that the passions wage.

Not thus ever the wild storm's rattle
  Rends the air with its hoarse high roar;
Not thus ever the great waves' battle
  Booms on the bare sea shore.

Night must wane, and the glad day's dawning
  Still the air with a swift sweet charm;
Hope must come in a cloudless morning,
  Wafting a windless calm.

And lo! as I looked, a faint far glory,
  Stealing grey through the gloom of night,
Told in the hush of the winds its story
  Of love that lives in the light.

Calm.

Soft is the slumber
That brooods on the sea,
And the silence of Ocean
Is peace unto me:
For the sigh of the western
Wind's breath only breaks
Soft-breathed as the whisper
Of love that awakes.

No cloud on the splendour
To chill with the glance
Of a passion that passes
With change and with chance;
But sea and sky blending,
In infinite blue,
Are as faith that is fearless,
And troth that is true.

As I frame thee in fancy,
O heart of my choice!
The calm is a vision,
The silence a voice;
For warm as the sunlight,
And wide as the sea,
And strong as its stillness,
Is thy love for me.

XVI.

Conscius Consciae.

WHERE shall I tell the tale of my loving?
Low in the hush where hearts may beat,
Stirred by the passion and pulse of the music,
Thrilled by the throb of the dancer's feet?
Or when the world and its ways are forgotten,
While in the gloom with the hearth aglow
We watch, and the hopes and fears of our fancy
Shift with the shadows that come and go?

Where shall I tell the tale of my loving?
As down we drop with the sliding stream,
And the plash of oars and the play of voices
Is faint and far as a dream in a dream?

When her face looks full to the last of the sunset,
And gold is the light in the grey of her eyes,
And the peace that falls with the night is round us,
And all the laughter of daylight dies?

Nay, for I need no tale of my loving,
Nay, for the scene works not the spell,
He that doubts, let him ask assurance,
He that would win with words, let *him* tell;
We that have looked into eyes that answer,
Growing in love as our lives have grown,
Learning the secret of souls in silence,
Need we a token? We know, and are known.

XVII.

Death by Misadventure.

YES, sir, I'll stand as a witness, I know the truth
of the case
Of the lady that acts in the play, sir, her with the
painted face!
The same that's charged with having a hand in
the stabbing scene,
And knowing what tales of an "accident done for
the purpose" mean.

Yes, and I've something to tell that I've sworn in
God's own name
I would hide excepting to save the lady from open
shame;

Never a soul has the secret, never a word has been said,
I've kept it till now, and I break it now, for the sake of the dead.

Ay! of the dead! I see her again! the stage and the lights and all!
And the hush of the horrid scene comes over me like a pall;
And I hear the last slow words that come with her hissing breath,
And the dagger is drawn and gleams, and her face is as pale as death.

You know how the play goes, eh, sir? how one woman steals the heart
Of a man that another's mad for—her husband played the part—

And how at the last she stabs herself, for she
hates her life,
And would loathe to live and see her rival a wed-
ded wife.

This was the last performance, they played their
'best that night,
And she was as real as life, sir—needed no paint
to look white;
And I flinched as I saw the flash, and the des-
perate lunge of the steel;
And she fell to the ground face down, as if dead—
I'd have sworn it was real.

And all on a sudden the hush gave way with the
curtain's fall,
And they rose to a man from their places—box
and pit and stall;

And they stood, and I stood with the rest of them,
cheering and yelling her name;
But not a fold of the curtain stirred, and she never
came.

And nothing would quiet us down till the manager
stepped on the stage,
And his face in the footlights' flare was a horror
to haunt for an age;
And he gasped out a word about asking our par-
dons, and how it appeared
An awful mistake had been made with the dag-
gers—fatal he feared.

Ah, God! How it flashed upon me! Too real, too
real for a play!
And before I knew where I was, I had madly torn
my way

Through the thick of the swells and people, who
stared in blank surprise,
As I cried, "Let me pass! She's my sister! I'll
see her before she dies!"

Ay, sister! You won't laugh, will you, sir? if I
show some tears,
When I think of the happy home that was ours
in other years;
When we played in the farm and field together,
child and child,
And she grew to a winsome wench, sir, as comely
as ever smiled.

Till a stranger came, as they will, sir, came with
his charm and grace,
A player he was, and he won her heart with his
pretty face;

Won it and wedded her too, sir, wedded her square
enough,
And took her away to the boards, sir, and taught
her his play-going stuff.

But she loved him with all her heart, with a love
such as never was known,
And she loved the trade, at first for his sake, and
then for its own;
And we heard of her now and again, such news as
we chanced to get,
She was making a name, they said, high up in a
first-class set.

And I never feared she would soil her soul in the
dirt of the town,
Or that praise and the promise of gold would drag
her modesty down;

But I wasn't so sure of him, and that night I'd a
kind of sense
That he played his love to her rival a bit too well
for pretence.

Where was I, sir? Let me see. I was trying to
get to her side;
Well—I found her stretched on a couch—they were
stemming the red blood's tide;
But she saw me and smiled, and faintly she signed
to the rest to be gone,
Husband and doctor and friends—she must speak
to me all alone.

"Dick," says she, "dear Dick, this is good of you
Dick," she says,
With a gasp and a sob, and a hot hand held to
the stain of her dress,

And the other laid in mine, and her head propped
up on my arm—
You'll excuse my being a child, sir, I hav'nt the
heart to be calm.

"I did it," she says, "myself, Dick—I couldn't
bear my life,
For he wanted that woman instead, and wished he
had got no wife;
I saw that they loved each other, they played
their parts too well,
And I knew I was in the way, Dick,—a woman
can always tell.

"But I waited till now—you see, my engagement
ends to-night;
No one saw when I changed my dagger for her's
that was sharp and bright;

Mine was a sham one for use, but hers was meant
for show,
They call it "a fatal mistake" and I want them
never to know.

"So you'll keep it a secret, won't you? it's not
that I feel ashamed,
But if people guessed the truth, they would surely
both be blamed,
And I wouldn't have *him* unhappy, that's why I
wished to go.
If I'd stayed they might have sinned, and—I could
not bear it so.

"Stay, though, a fancy comes on me—who knows
but a tale may spread,
How that—she took my dagger—and put her own
in its stead?

They dare not say it of *him*, Dick—but men may
whisper a lie,
That would ruin her life and his, till they longed,
as I did, to die.

"So, Dick—if it comes to the worst—you may
make the mystery plain,
She wronged me—only in thought—but her hand
is free from stain;
I bear her no malice—ah, no! God forgive her—
and him—and me—
Dear God,—give us all pure hearts,—and a heaven
of love with Thee.

"Closer, Dick, so, the blood comes fast—and the
light's getting low.
Where is he? Call him! call him! My husband!
—ah, no, no, no!

Not mine, not mine—and it's dark, too dark to see
the dear face,
Quick—kiss me! Dick—tell him I'll look for him
there,—and keep him a place."

Well, sir, I'm not much good at a tale, but I've
said what I've said,
I've kept the secret and break it now, for the sake
of the dead:
The woman's not guilty of crime, though she
stabbed her another way.
God pardon her that—God pardon them both—I
heard *her* pray.

And she, my sister? I know that they call it a
deadly crime
To take the life that is lent before God's appointed
time;

I only think that she dared the death without
count of cost,
And had sinned the sin for another's sake, though
heaven were lost.

Sin! Is it a sin for another's sake to give the gift
of a life?
See, one for his fatherland falls dead in the stress
of the strife;
And one through the flame and the ruin rescues
and laughs to die,
And the swimmer plunges and saves, and sinks
with never a cry.

And One on the cursed hill, the Man that we call
the Christ,
Hung in a horror of shame, for love's sake sacri-
ficed.

I speak in all reverence, sir, but I think that she
followed His feet,
And has reached, through a struggle of pain, the
rest of the peace that is sweet.

XVIII.

Sea Memories.

To live beside the shore and catch the calling
  Of sea to sea at midnight and at morn,
By noon and eventide to face the falling
  Of waves unwearied on a strand unworn.

Westward afar to watch the waters glisten
  Fronting the golden advent of the day,
In the long hush of night to lie and listen
  While the low music melts along the bay.

So sweet it is as when a fair face lightens
  Daily the labour of a burdened life,
So dear as when one voice for ever brightens
  With beauty the still intervals of strife.

And like as when the world in rush and riot
Too loudly lures us to a lower choice,
Yet from that presence an unconscious quiet
Charms in the vision, chastens in the voice.

So seems it in my life beside the motion
Of surges that are ceaseless on the shore;
Lost is the magic monotone of ocean
Unheeded in the noise of worldly war.

So seems it when the waters' ebb and flowing
Draws not the ear and dazzles not the sight,
Not less their nearness is to me, not knowing,
A silent solace of undream'd delight.

XIX.

A Song of Tyrol.

TYROLESE reapers! man and maid,
Give not harvest hours to sleep!
Sweet though it be to press the shade,
Reapers of Tyrol, up and reap!
Gone is the might of the golden noon
Westward waning over the sky,
Westward ever, and all too soon
Up the valley the day will die.

O, but weary are they that go
Forth to work in the misty morn,
Soon as the utmost heights of snow
Blush with a kiss from the rosy dawn;

Sweet is the guerdon of labour done,
  Trust the morrow and take your rest;
Under many a summer sun
  Still your work shall be surely blest.

Soft to sleep in the hush of day
  Nature's voices wooing call,
Here in heavenly scent of hay
  Cicalas hold high festival;—
Whispered airs from the woods of pine,
  Undertones of the moving mill;
Clinging, clattering, bells of kine
  Battened high on the hanging hill.

O, and sweetest of minstrelsy!
  Song of the restless rill that strays,
Laughing loud in a whirl of glee,
  Lisping low to pastoral lays;

Since when over the beetling steep
Sheer it fell from its rocky ridge,
Soon by Italy's towers to sweep
Spanned by many a noble bridge.

Reapers of Tyrol! sons of the soil!
Here in Heaven's untainted air
Truly I hold your lot of toil
Dearer than ease in a home less fair:
Well may ye that in such a land
Move by mountain and stream and wood
Wonder not that the work of His hand
Seemed, to Him that had made it, good.

GOSSENSASS ON THE BRENNER, 1883.

XX.

The "Fates" of the Parthenon.

A SONNET.

Ye sit and muse upon life's mystery,
Weaving the web of happiness and harm,
Yourselves untouch'd of fortune, by the charm
Encircled of your self-sufficiency.
This sudden fame of a new deity
Born of the Thunderer's brain with loud alarm
Not greatly moves your grand Olympic calm;
Such might was in the master's hand, when he
Informed you with the perfect strength, that still
Time mocks not at, nor ruin maketh mean;
Such mellow grace lives in the moulded round
And rhythm of fair limbs that vex our skill
By phantasy to fashion what has been;
This is the majesty of queens discrown'd.

XXI.

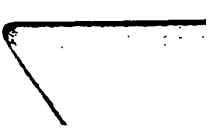
To ———

" *Was passt das musst sich ründen.*"

(From the German of Novalis.)

TWIN halves must grow complete,
Twin minds together meet,
Twin faiths each other greet,
  Twin loves their lives must share;
What hindereth must clear,
What marreth disappear,
What is afar draw near,
  What blossometh must bear.

Trust me, dear heart, and lay
Hand in my hand and say,

Thou wilt not turn away
  Ever thine eyes from me:
One Cross to which we turn,
One goal for which we yearn,
One hope with which we burn,
  One Heaven for me and thee!

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